

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 DHA-02  
TRSE-00 SY-05 MCT-01 /077 W  
-----022334Z 099892 /63

R 022210Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4630

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTIAGO 3601

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ELAB CI PINT  
SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT SHOW DOMINATES CHILEAN MAY DAY

1. SUMMARY: ONCE AGAIN, THE GOC PREEMPTED CHILEAN LABOR DAY ACTIVITIES BY ASSEMBLING AN IMPRESSIVE CROWD OF 2,500 LABOR LEADERS IN THE GOVERNMENT DIEGO PORTALES AUDITORIUM FOR SPEECH BY THE LABOR MINISTER, A LABOR REPRESENTATIVE AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC. LABOR MINISTER'S MOST SIGNIFICANT STATEMENT WAS THAT TRI-PARTITE COMMISSIONS WOULD BE GIVEN POWER TO RESOLVE LABOR DISPUTES.

2. SINCE THE GOVERNMENT DENIED PERMISSION FOR A GROUP OF TRADE UNIONS TO HAVE A SEPARATE LABOR CELEBRATION, MOST DEMOCRATIC LABOR LEADERS ATTENDED RAUL CARDINAL SILVA'S LABOR MASS LATER IN A PACKED CATHEDRAL. THE CRWOD CHEERED THE CARDINAL WILDLY AND DID SOME SHOUTING AND SINGING, BUT THERE WAS NO VIOLENCE. THE CARDINAL CALLED FOR GREATER WORKER PARTICIPATION IN THE DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES AND CRITICIZED THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL SECURITY. END SUMMARY.

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3. MAY DAY CELEBRATION THIS YEAR WAS DOMINATED BY OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT EVENTS FOR THE WORKERS IN SANTIAGO AND THE PROVINCES. THE GOVERNMENT STARTED SEVERAL DAYS AHEAD OF TIME WITH INFORMAL VISITS BY PRESIDENT PINOCHET TO LOCAL INDUSTRY, A PROFESSIONAL SEMINAR FOR LABOR LEADERS APRIL 27-30, THE OPENING OF A GOC SCHOOL FOR LABOR LEADERS, AND THE

PRESIDENT'S EXPLANATION OF GOC LABOR AND ECONOMIC POLICY TO 48 PRO-GOVERNMENT LABOR LEADERS. THE MESSAGE WAS ALWAYS THE SAME: "HAVE FAITH AND CONFIDENCE IN YOUR GOVERNMENT, AND KEEP OUT OF POLITICS." FOR MAY DAY, PINOCHET INVITED 2,500 LABOR LEADERS TO THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE "DIEGO PORTALES" FOR SPEECHES BY HIMSELF, SERGIO FERNANDEZ, LABOR MINISTER, AND GUILLERMO MEDINA, THE LABOR REPRESENTATIVE ON THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

4. THE SELECTION OF MEDINA AS LABOR SPOKESMAN WAS CRITICIZED BY SOME PRO-GOVERNMENT LABOR LEADERS. MEDINA'S MOST IMPORTANT POINT WAS THE NEED TO RESPECT THE PRIVILEGE OF UNION LEADERS NOT TO BE FIRED OR MOVED FROM THEIR JOBS BECAUSE OF UNION ACTIVITY -- A RIGHT, HE SAID, THAT WAS BEING TRANSGREASED.

5. MINISTER FERNANDEZ ANNOUNCED THAT A NEW DECREE LAW WOULD SOON BE PUBLISHED GIVING THE TRI-PARTITE COMMISSIONS (INDUSTRY, LABOR, GOVERNMENT) EXPANDED POWERS TO RAISE WAGES AND WRITE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS. FERNANDEZ STRESSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN THE COMMISSIONS WOULD BE SECONDARY EXCEPT WHEN THE PARTIES DID NOT AGREE OR WHEN AN AGREEMENT PREJUDICED THE RIGHTS OF OTHER WORKERS OR THE NATIONAL ECONOMY. HE SPOKE OF THE THE REPLACEMENT OF STRIKES BY AN ARBITRATION MECHANISM BUT GAVE NO DETAILS. FERNANDEZ OFFERED CONTINUING COOPERATION WITH THE ILO ON THE TECHNICAL MATTERS  
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WITHIN ITS COMPETENCE BUT REJECTED ANY ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AGAINST CHILE. HE ALSO ATTACKED STRONGLY AND USED THREATENING LANGUAGE TOWARD "MINORITY GROUPS" WHO ARE TRYING TO GET BACK THEIR LOST PRIVILEGES (I.E., THE "DINAMICOS"?). PINOCHET'S SHORT REMARKS WERE DELIVERED IMPRESSIVELY BUT THE THEME WAS FAMILIAR: PRAISE FOR THE WORKERS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHILE'S ECONOMY AND FUTURE, AND THE NEED FOR UNBREAKABLE FAITH IN THE JUNTA'S OBJECTIVES OF MAKING CHILE A GREAT NATION. APPLAUSE WAS GOOD.

6. FOR THE MANY LEADERS NOT INVITED TO THE DIEGO PORTALES CEREMONY, MOST OF THE INDEPENDENT "DINAMICOS", THE LATE AFTERNOON MASS AT THE CATHEDRAL PROVIDED THE PREFERRED CELEBRATION OF MAY DAY. ALL THE "DINAMICOS" WERE THERE. TWO TO THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE PACKED THEMSELVES IN THE CHURCH. WHEN THE CARDINAL APPEARED THERE WERE CHEERS AND APPLAUSE. THE CARDINAL HAD TO REMIND THE FAITHFUL THAT HE WAS THERE TO CELEBRATE MASS AND NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN A

POLITICAL DEMONSTRATION. THE CARDINAL'S SERMON WAS NOT PARTICULARLY POINTED: HE CALLED FOR GREATER PARTICIPATION BY THE WORKERS IN THE ECONOMIC DECISIONS WHICH AFFECT THEIR LIVES, AND SAID THAT THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE INCLUDED THE RIGHT FREELY TO ELECT REPRESENTATIVES TO TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS. HIS BITTEREST ATTACK CONCERNED WHAT HE CALLED THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL SECURITY, WHICH HE CALLED COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE WITHOUT A PROGRESSIVE INCORPORATION

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TRSE-00 SY-05 MCT-01 /077 W

-----022334Z 099990 /63

R 022210Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4631

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SANTIAGO 3601

OF THE WORKING PEOPLE IN LEADERSHIP ROLES, AS IS THEIR RIGHT AND OBLIGATION. THE CARDINAL WAS AGAIN CHEERED ENTHUSIASTICALLY AFTER THE MASS, AND THE CROWD BEGAN CHANTING "LIBERTAD" AS IT LEFT. THE NOISE STOPPED AS PEOPLE PASSED OUTSIDE THROUGH LINES OF WELL ARMED CARABINEROS (NATIONAL POLICE) STANDING IMPASSIVELY BY.

8. COMMENT: THE GOVERNMENT HAS EFFECTIVELY TAKEN OVER MAY DAY AS LABOR'S CELEBRATION, AND PINOCHET APPEARS TO HAVE USED IT TO BUILD UP HIS OWN POSITION. THE "DINAMICOS" REQUEST TO HOLD THEIR OWN MEETING WAS TURNED DOWN ON THE GROUND THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS PROVIDING THE MEANS OF CELEBRATION FOR ALL LABOR. THE GOVERNMENT PROVED THAT IT CAN COUNT ON THE SUPPORT OF AN IMPORTANT MEMBER OF LABOR LEADERS. PRO-GOVERNMENT LEADERS FELL OVER THEMSELVES PUBLICLY AND IN REMARKS AMONG THEMSELVES PRAISING THE LABOR MINISTER'S SPEECH AND CONDEMNING "POLITICIANS" -- THE PEJORATIVE USED FOR CRITICS

OF THE GOC.

9. THE ATMOSPHERE IN DIEGO PORTALES WAS CALM AND  
SEDATE, PARTICULARLY IN CONTRAST TO THE CATHEDRAL.  
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IN THE LATTER PEOPLE APPEARED MORE INTERESTED IN PROTESTING  
THAN DISPLAYING THEIR RELIGIOUS FERVOR. AS SOME  
LEADERS SAID LATER, THE CARDINAL IS NOW THE ONLY  
IMPORTANT CHILEAN WHO CAN STILL SPEAK OUT CRITICALLY  
ON CERTAIN SUBJECTS WITHOUT FEAR. IN CONTRAST TO PREDICTIONS,  
HOWEVER, THE CARDINAL DID NOT CHANGE THE HOUR OF HIS MASS  
TO COMPETE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S CELEBRATION. HIS  
MESSAGE TO THE GOVERNMENT WAS CLEAR, BUT IT WAS NOT  
PROVOCATIVE.

10. THE GOC WAS CONCERNED OVER THE POSSIBILITY  
OF VIOLENCE. WHETHER BY DESIGN OR BECAUSE OF  
INEFFECTUALITY, THE BOMBS OF VARIOUS SIZES THAT  
WENT OFF IN THE NIGHTS BEFORE MAY 1 HURT NO ONE  
AND CAUSED NO SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE. BUT SECURITY  
AT DIEGO PORTALES WAS TIGHT, AND PLENTY OF POLICE  
WERE ON HAND AT THE CATHEDRAL.  
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## Message Attributes

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